

Brown & Martin's

newsletter

Don't Call Me, I'll Call You!



Chip Martin

I was going to sign up for the Do Not Call list, but I haven't been able to because

my phone keeps ringing.

Telemarketers have tried to sell me windows, credit cards, newspapers, magazines and lots more. I love the way the voice of a telemarketer rises in volume and speeds up when he realizes I'm not going to hang up right away. I suppose it's cruel, but I can't help myself.

Eventually, I resort to the "Seinfeld" system and say, "I'm sorry, my other phone is ringing and I have to answer it. Can I call you back in about 5 hours?"

The caller informs me that he won't be there in 5 hours. "Well, give me your home number and I'll call you there," I say. The caller refuses, explaining that he doesn't take sales calls at home. "Now you know how I feel," I say, and hang up.

I also take all sorts of surveys by phone that I really don't want to take. But I seldom answer any of the questions truthfully, which I figure makes things even.

"Did you vote in the last election?"

"Several times."

Pause ... "Do you favor

having to show a photo ID at polling places?"

"No. Then I'd only be able to vote once."

Longer pause ... "Are you familiar with the candidates in the upcoming election?"

"I don't have to be. I always write in my own name."

Click ...

When the caller hangs up, I chalk one up in my victory column.

If I decide to answer written surveys or email surveys, I'm generally truthful because they're allowing me to decide whether or not to participate in the survey. And, if I do, I can complete it when and where I want to. Which is one of the points of this otherwise meaningless column.

Marketing communications tactics are changing ... and the reactions of targeted prospects are changing as well.

It's tough to keep up. Yet many companies keep doing things the same way they've done them in the past ... whether it works or not.

If you want better performance from your marketing and PR efforts, consider partnering with professionals like those that hang around this office. They can point out options and help bring out the best in company resources.

Don't wait for us to call you. We know how aggravating that can be.

Why Your Employees Will Benefit From Listening to Dale (Hey, we listen to him all the time ... now it's your turn.)

United States consumers spend more on trash bags than consumers of 90 other countries spend on everything. In other words, the receptacles for our waste cost more than all the goods consumed by nearly half of the world's nations. Yet, over the last 30 years, the percentage of U.S. citizens who described themselves as "very happy" has fallen from 36 percent to 29 percent.

The American Dream of more consumption, bigger promotions and a lot more money, apparently isn't leading employees or business leaders to the pot at the end of the rainbow.

According to recent studies three things are becoming more important and define true wealth to those who are "very happy." These are:

- strong relationships (with family, spouse, friends, and so on),
- personal integrity (honesty and being true to oneself), and
- exploration (knowledge, learning, and creativity).

Impressing others, status and power are near the bottom of the list.

Enter our own Dale Brown. Dale's presentation, "Getting From Where You Are to Where You Want to Be," can help your employees, convention attendees, meeting participants and others better understand and deal with changing trends and personal values. He'll help them to become more productive and more fulfilled. They'll thank you and you'll find that their happiness will improve your bottom line.

Visit www.dale-brown.com for more information.

Sexy Food

Americans rate whipped cream as the sexiest food according to a poll by Food & Wine. A heart-shaped, ruby-red strawberry came in second.

Equally interesting, 44% eat most of their meals at the kitchen table, 32% at a coffee table, 18% at the dining-room table and an athletic 6% standing up.



How NOT to Promote Honesty

A marketing firm set up a living-room environment in Toronto's Union Station to promote the opening of a furniture store (Ikea's) in the area.

Rather than guarding the goods, the creatives attached signs reading "Steal me" to each item with additional copy like, "What better way to make a friend than to say 'Excuse me, want to help me steal this sofa?' The two of you will be able to look back at this day and say, 'Hey, remember the time we stole that sofa?' And you'll laugh. Of course, you and your new friend could just go to Ikea and buy the sofa for only \$299!"

The firm predicted Canadians would be too honest to actually take the furniture.

Every item in the display was gone within 8 minutes.

Brown & Martin's Newsletter

Issue: XXX
No. 007

Remember you're unique, just like everyone else.

Editor: Chip Martin

This newsletter is produced for clients of Brown & Martin, Inc., a marketing and public relations firm serving companies across the country. If you're not a client, quit reading! Or, call us and become one.

Does the Email Coming From Your Company Suck?

The answer is, "probably." Think about it. How would you react to a formal business letter that contained no standard greeting, was riddled with grammatical errors and misspellings, inferred that you were in idiot, was not sensitive to the number of tasks currently on your plate and asked you to perform a specific chore during work-time hours? Would you send a cordial reply or toss the letter in the trash?

These kinds of letters, which can only be categorized as incompetent at best and insensitive at worst, are delivered every day to you, your vendors and your customers.

Email generated by a company's employees reflects on that company. Yet, employees who write and/or communicate poorly and would never be allowed to send formal snail mail without having a qualified secretary format and

proof the material, are given free reign to email customers and others at will.

Worse yet, many employees use email when it shouldn't be used ... particularly when trying to resolve problems or conflicts. Ten emails can quickly go back and forth between your company and a customer when a single, five minute phone call could quickly fix the problem while leaving a good impression.

To help solve these problems, companies should set official email guidelines. Here are some tips.

1. Users should always reread their messages before they click the "send" icon. Employing "spell-check" alone does not compensate for proofreading.
2. Even if an email business communication is informal, standard business letter etiquette should apply. This means



business email should start out with some type of formal greeting. Agree on a format and make sure everyone follows it.

3. Email should never be used to try and solve customer or internal problems. Pick up the phone or walk over to the other person's office.

B&M can help you establish guidelines aimed at improving the quality of email generated by employees. Give us a call.

Chip Shot

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

6 Trade Show Money Savers

Budgets are under microscopes these days, so here are 6 trade show money savers.

1. Submit a product for the "new product showcase." It's great visibility for little or no cost.
2. Send attending media a "memorable" email pitch before the show with a legitimate reason for visiting your exhibit.
3. Design your booth to be a center of interactivity that draws crowds in, versus a monument to meaningless expense and wasted space.
4. Service the pressroom wisely and don't

waste money on thick, inefficient press kits.

5. Invest in something out of the ordinary that will help to attract visitors. An operating piece of equipment that you sell works great. Or, a puppet can attract and entertain visitors while educating them about your products. It can also pre-qualify visitors to help your sales staff target real prospects.
6. Usually hotels can identify guests specific to a given trade show and will hand-deliver mailers to guest rooms for \$1.50 to \$3 each.